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## New recruits get a preview look at Army

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**FORT HOOD** — The first view most recruits get of the military is their drill sergeant yelling at them to get off the bus and get in formation for the start of basic training.

However, 28 members of the Army's Delayed Enlistment Program from Houston got a sneak preview Tuesday of what awaits them in the military — at least what they'll get after the drill-sergeant stops yelling.

While they stood in a somewhat ragged formation, Col. Kenton Ashworth welcomed the recruits — who will ship out to boot camp at various times throughout the upcoming



**LEFT:** Angela Collura of Deer Park, a psychological-operations recruit, checks out an M-16 rifle.

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year.

In his speech, Ashworth, commander of the Division Support Command, 1st Cavalry Division, stressed the importance of taking the opportunity to ask Cav troopers questions.

"I think this is our opportunity to show what the Army is all about," Ashworth said. "Our values, our ethics and just to show you soldiers in the

motor pool and how they come together from all over the world to defend the country."

Following Ashworth's greeting, the recruits received a briefing from the Army's Delayed Enlistment Program sergeant major about Army life.

After the briefing, they climbed

aboard two trucks and headed out for the meat of their orientation — a tour of the 27th Main Support Battalion's motor pool. The 27th MSB is responsible for providing support functions such as maintenance, transportation and supply to the 1st Cav's units.

The recruits from Houston have myriad reasons for joining the Army, but the main reason mentioned by many of them for enlisting in the DEP was the ability to earn money for college once they finish their enlistments.

The DEP allows potential recruits to sign up for the service up to a year before they leave for boot camp.

Angela Collura, 18, of Deer Park, will be leaving for boot

camp in July after her high school graduation.

When she finishes, Collura said, she will go to school to study psychological warfare. She looked into joining the other services because of her desire to be a journalist, but in the end decided to join the Army because of the benefits.

"I joined the Army because it gives me money for college, and I'll get to travel," Collura said.

During the tour of the motor pool, the recruits were given a glimpse of some of the myriad jobs the Army has to offer, including electronic technicians, engine and tracked vehicle mechanics and vehicle crews.

However, the recruits' favorite display was the one set up by the battalion's

armorers.

"It was pretty cool, I liked the (night vision goggles) the best and the guns," said Michael Hill, 17, of Pasadena, who has enlisted to be an infantryman.

The display included M-2 .50-caliber machine gun, M-249 squad automatic weapon, M-16A2 rifle with an M-203 grenade launcher attached, M-4 carbine and the Mk-19 automatic grenade launcher.

Matt Freeman, 17, of LaPorte, enjoyed the weapons display especially the M-2 and the Mk-19. When he finishes boot camp later this summer, Freeman will come home to finish his senior year of high school. The following summer he will leave again for training as an electrician and then join a combat engineer unit.

"It was really informative, and we've gotten to see a lot of cool stuff so far," Freeman said.

As for his reasons for joining the Army, Freeman said that the biggest incentive was the money the service will give him to go to college.

The visit, Ashworth said, should help dispel rumors or myths that recruits may have heard from their friends in high school who have chosen not to go into the military.

"They can actually talk to the young soldiers. It may not be everything they want to hear, but I think they need to ask their questions," Ashworth said.

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